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City Attorney Zach Klein Says Court Sides With City, Imposes Tougher Penalties on Eastland Mall Owners Who Let Property Fall into Disrepair

Franklin County Environmental Court grants City's request to fine owners \$10,000 with an additional \$1,000 per day in fines until the property is brought into compliance with all health and safety codes

COLUMBUS, OH— Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today announced the Franklin County Municipal Court has again sided with the City in holding the owners of the Eastland Park Mall in contempt of a June 2022 court order for failing to secure the property and bring it up to code. The Court imposed a new, tougher penalties against Eastland Mall Holdings LLC, the owners of the shuttered Eastland Mall, including a \$10,000 fine, additional daily \$1,000 per day fines that will continue until code violations are addressed, and requiring owners to submit plan for how they will fix up the property.

“The Eastland Mall owners have shown no regard for their obligations to the city, to the court and to our friends and neighbors on the east side, and now they find themselves yet again in contempt of court and racking up fines,” said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. **“Holding owners accountable is critical to ensuring this site can once again be a catalyst for jobs and economic growth as we look to the future of the east side of Columbus.”**

This latest decision was not the first time the City Attorney's Office filed to hold the mall owners in contempt of court. In September 2022, the Court found owners to be in contempt of the same [June 2022 order](#). In that ruling, the court fined owners \$3,500 and imposed an additional fine of \$250 for each day the property remained non-compliant. To date, owners have not paid any fines and have yet to bring the site into compliance.

The City noted numerous health and safety violations in their most recent filing, including broken glass, inoperable fire safety systems, failure to properly board up the site, parking areas in disrepair, and high grass, weeds and debris littering the site.

The Court granted the City's request to impose a \$10,000 fine on the owners and increase additional daily fines to \$1,000 per day for non-compliance. The Court also ordered owners to

disclose current remediation plans for the site, including proof of financing to complete the fixes, as well as mandate that an individual member of the ownership LLC appear at the next hearing.

In addition, the Property Action Team filed a separate motion with the Court to allow a receiver to inspect the property. This is the first step towards a receiver taking over the property in the event that owners continue to defy the Court and their obligations to the City and nearby residents. A decision on that motion is pending.